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A CHAPTER ON SLANDER

"Tis as easy as lying."—Hamlet.
A skillful and adroit liar has some claim to intellectual regard just as the devil commands some respect for his burning throne; but a vulgar and slummy liar honorable men detest and loathe peremptorily. A triumph founded on deceit is the most disastrous of defeats. Take Parolles, one of Shakespeare's blue ribbon miscreants; his downfall was brought about by a cheat and the reader almost yielded his sympathy in consequence. Then how must it be when an honest man becomes the mark of your dirty and wholesome slanderer?
It is impossible for any honest man, who knows anything about it, to keep his temper when he contemplates the knavish crusades the grafters, whom he choked off the public crib, preach against Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy in President Wilson's Cabinet. Had Mr. Daniels pursued the course of some of his predecessors and allowed the Department to be run by a naval "set" that plagued the service for so many years, he would now be heralded as the greatest mind of marine since Noah was a sailor.

Do you remember the odious and infamous conspiracy to rob the late Admiral Schley of the glory he gained by the victory of Santiago? He was not of the pet naval clique and was promptly court-martialed for fighting when Sampson was way off yonder somewhere. That was horrible. Schley was offensive to the naval snobs because he was a gentleman as well as a hero. One snob, vicious in his testimony against Schley, was rewarded by sending him to the most exclusive court in Europe, where he was naval attaché of the legation. He stayed there a junketing till he reached the age of retirement, when he was "plucked," because he had been a pet so long that he had not seen the sea service requisite to retire him as an admiral, a rank, by the way, never attained by Paul Jones, or Preble, or Chauncey, or Truxton, or Stewart, or Decatur, or Bainbridge, or Perry, or Macdonough; and there was a great big bunch of hell raised over this upstart, and they blamed Daniels for that when he was only executing the law.

The New York Sun appoints itself the foul sewer through which is poured the scurrility of this vile tribe that hounds the Secretary. It sneers perennially and revels in the slanders. Not long ago it quoted "an officer high in the navy" as follows:

"I was on duty in Washington for one year while Admiral Fiske was aid for operations, and if the truth were all known concerning the indifference shown military and naval matters of the most vital importance to the attention of the Secretary, but they were pushed aside and ignored. 'Fiske's conduct all through was highly honorable in every way, and any attempt to discredit him or reflect upon him is highly dishonorable. He did his duty while others criminally neglected theirs, and as a result the navy is now totally unprepared for war.'"
I don't care how "high" that officer is. He is a coward and a disgrace to the cloth as is evidenced when like a craven cur he hides behind an anonymity to brake his full slander at the head of the Department. I'll bet he was of that scurvy set that hounded Schley.

It is gone forth that the navy is disorganized and demoralized and not fit for anything. Admiral Dewey ought to know a little bit about the navy. He has a desk in the Department and is constantly on duty. Here is what he says about the navy as it is under the administration of Josephus Daniels:

"Our navy is not excelled, except in size, by the fleet of any nation in the world."
Now, whom will you believe, Geo. Dewey, or an anonymous scamp? Choose between them.

When any devilment is afloat, the Frenchman says, "Find the woman in the case." We Americans say, "Find the dollar in the case," and that I am about to do.

Josephus Daniels, at this time, is causing the manufacture of powder for the navy at the price of 34 cents a pound that his predecessors in the Department paid from 50 to 80 cents a pound for when they contracted with the Powder Trust. Daniel's plan hit the trust to the tune of \$1,115,793 a year. You can buy a heap of lying and slander in our glorious Union for half the money. Then there are the projectile makers. They had their hands into the public purse up to the elbow when Daniels became Secretary. The first thing he did was to cut out of their bid \$1,077,219 graft, and there again Josephus made some enemies for whom all honest men honor him. Then there is that armor plate set. Daniels forced them to drop \$1,110,054 from their bid and they are barking at him. Under Secretaries Moody, Morton, Bonaparte and Meyer he raked off of the armor people was \$70,000,000. Had Daniels put up with that graft he would be lauded to the skies by the very set who now revile and slander him.

Secretary Long, head of the navy, under McKinley, issued an order that enlisted men should not be served with alcoholic drink at the mess. Daniels thought that if sobriety is good for the forecable, it ought also be good for the quarter-deck, so he cut off the officers' grog. The devil was to pay about that. That seraph of purity and of patriotism—also or self—William Randolph Hearst, tried to drop into wit about it in a clumsy sort of way, but Daniels was vindicated when the big navies of Europe dropped into temperance when they entered that big war over there. I have had many years of observation

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